

JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

In
Words and Pictures
I Should Say So!!



CARICATURE OF THE AUTHOR AND ARTIST BY HIMSELF.

"COME LIVE WITH ME AND BE MY COOK"

"I'll bet I can bag a cook and bring it home to-day, at that!"
"Go to it, Billy," smiled Polly, punching another pillow in the solar plexus and poking it behind her as she settled herself on the lounge.

"Smile on, woman, but I mean it. It's arrant nonsense to say there isn't such an animal."
"I didn't say so; I said I hadn't found one yet!"
"You've been at it for eight days, and we are still eating the messes that Great Auk sends in to us. I have said nothing."
"Nothing!" snorts Friend Consort on the lounge. "You have made a noise like an outraged husband at every meal!"

"Well, be that as it isn't, the time has come for action. I can no longer stand having burnt suspender buttons called fried potatoes, nor yet can I with any degree of pleasure cut into an Indian basket filled with concrete because the Great Auk has broken a bottle of Burnett's vanilla extract over its bow and murmured: 'I christen thee 'Apple Pie!' The mrowning piece of waxy deception was this morning, when I, in my trusting and fatuous innocence, thought she had sent in some brand new chamois pen wipers and was about to lay them on the desk."

"You refer to the griddle cakes?"
"Aye, verily, none other! This ends to-day! I shall bring home an order for your feet a regular cook! Adios!"

Billy knew that in order to get a cook one had to hike over to Fourth av. and look up the Swedish Embassy or the Finnish Legation. He soon came to one of them. There was a long line of limousines drawn up at the curb. Billy noticed that the chauffeurs were all looking anxiously up at the doorway of the embassy.

From the expressions of these chauffeurs' faces he gathered that their employers had told them to wait within earshot, and if they heard the slightest report of a revolver to break in immediately.

Getting a cook was a more serious game than he had imagined.

He went up the steps with a manner of well simulated confidence and entered. Around the walls of the shabby-centel office sat humble American ladies backed threateningly into corners and being menaced by the powers of Europe.

The ladies sat well back in their chairs, holding their muffs or bags up for protection. The

foreign powers sat well forward, catechizing and cross-examining their potential mistresses.

While waiting to be noticed Billy stood fascinated, listening to scraps of interviews from all along the line.

"Well, sir!" A foreign gentleman with a remarkably square head, sitting at a desk, addressed him.

"I want to get a—a let's see—"

Billy could hardly tell his eyes from one corner of the office where a rangy brute of a Norwegian laundress was giving a timid little lady from The Bronx a bad five minutes.

"Yes, sir!"

"Oh, yes, I am looking for a—what d'y' call 'em—cook!"

"What wages will you pay, sir?"
"Thirty-five dollars. And I want a damn good cook, at that!"

"You can't expect a first class cook, of course, for those wages. Still, I think I have what you want." Square Head Ludwig disappears behind a partition. "Young and good-looking!" Billy yells after him.

S. H. Ludwig re-enters, leading an Awful Retrospect in with him.

"What's this?" asks Billy.

"This is a nice young Danish cook!"

"She may be Danish, but I categorically deny that she is either nice or young, and I doubt her cooking. Take it back." Billy waves his hand.

S. H. Ludwig raises his wadded eyebrows and returns to the den with the nice young thing from Denmark. Billy can hear him arguing vehemently on the other side of the partition with some unseen female. He catches such phrases as, "Only two in the family," and "Nice, easy" something—whether himself or his wife Billy doesn't catch.

Re-enter Ludwig with another Terrible Blight, with a mustache no sophomore would need to be sensitive about and circular earrings like sailors are supposed to wear, which have almost pulled themselves away through her ears.

"I am not engaging a company to play 'Macbeth' or I would take her for one of the Witches of Endor. Where is the young Norwegian girl cooking school graduate that you advertise?" Billy is getting a bit peeved.

"This is it," smiles S. H. Ludwig, but waves her back.

Billy prays for self-control.

"You have the nerve to call that a young girl!"



"HE IS SHOWN A STRING ALL SIZES AND AGES."

That woman who was a grandmother when Charlemagne was in 'prep' school. Good morn-

ing!"
Billy dashes out of the place and hunts up another one and enters. He is shown a string of cooks of all sizes and ages, as in the first place, and begins to have a nightmarish sort of feeling that he will have to—or at least in all decency ought to—marry one of them. He feels a little woozy with this parade of all the nations going on.

"For the love of entrees, bring in something that was born since Aaron Burr shot Hamilton W. Mabie! These Ranshee harems are getting on my glaucious nerve!"
Still another great-aunt of a viking is yanked before him.

By this time Billy feels that he is going daffy and decides to give in to the sensation weakly. He glares at the ancient stover wrestler.
"So, my young Swedish flapper. Let's see your references."

She fumbles in a bag and fishes out several dirty letters.

"Yes, but where is your reference from Augustus Caesar's wife recommending your rendition of Roman Punch?"
Ludwig brings in another with a triumphant smile.

"There!" exclaims Billy. "This is something like! Why have you been hiding this Scandinavian Venus from me all this time?" Venus giggles and looks down at her feet.

"Can you come right along with me now?" Billy grins delightedly.

"How many in family?" asks Venus.

"Oh, just two—myself, my wife and myself," says Billy. "Come on."

"Do I have to wash?"

"Well, really, I shall leave that to your better and higher nature."

Ludwig interprets. "She means does she have to do any of the washing?"

"Oh, excuse me! I didn't quite get you. No; everything of ours is sent out to the laundry—come ahead!"

"Do you have much company?"

Billy is beginning to realize that there is another side to acquiring a cook. "Come over here and sit down and pour your little heart out to me."

So he and Venus sit down, Billy looking anxiously at Venus.

"Now, do we have much company? Never! I detest company! We never have an outsider in the place!"

"That's too bad. I like to have company. I like to cook for dinner parties."

Billy wilts and mutters to himself: "Can you beat that! I could have sworn I was saying the right thing!"

"What I meant to say was that we are always giving dinner parties. I thought you meant company, you know—just strangers off the street!"

"Do I have a room with another girl?"

"No, certainly not; you have a room all to yourself!" (There, I know that's right; all maids like rooms to themselves.)

"I not like that. I bane lonely."

Suffering crumpets! Couldn't he have guessed? "How many in the kitchen?"

"Well, that depends; sometimes there are anywhere from three to ten. I've seen nine in there at once myself, including the night watchman, but"

"How many servants?"

"Oh, just two—yourself and a waitress."

"Just one. I not take the place!" She bounces up and retires.

The ones that answer correctly and have no objection to anything at all are, of course, the ones he wouldn't consider at all.

As he said on the mahout: "As the cook will have to wait on the table twice every other week, she has to be able to pass things without sticking her stomach at you at the same time, if you know what I mean."

By this time the afternoon sun is stepping over the Palisades and Billy has had no lunch. He has been to every ignorance parlor on Fourth Avenue, and he feels as if he had been seeing Europe.

There are no more cooks to see. In the last place he entered all they could dig up was a general-housework girl, who refused to come with him because he said to her: "I see you're Finnish!"

So when worn out and with a rotten headache he let himself into his home about 6 o'clock of course Polly was waiting for him with a peculiar smile—a smile that combined affectionate sarcasm with a sort of motherly pity.

"Well?"

"Well what, dear?"

"Where's the cook?"

"What cook?"

"The one you were going to lay at my feet, Billy dear?"

"Be sweet to me, kid."

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Money makes the mare go, but at the races it's the other way about.

Money worries cause 12 per cent of the world's insanity.



"SHE'S LOOKING FOR A MAID HERSELF," SMILES THE MAHOUT. THAT'S MISS VERA LIPSALVE OF THE WINTER GARDEN."



"THIS IS IT," SMILED S. H. LUDWIG.